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PATTERN JURY INSTRUCTIONS ON SUPREME COURT WEB SITE

Lawyers, judges and librarians will now have ready access to recent changes in proposed jury instructions for civil cases. No longer will they have to wait until advance sheets or periodic volumes are formally published and distributed.

Beginning this week, recent changes in the instructions which are drafted by the Supreme Court Committee on Jury Instructions in Civil Cases will be available on the Illinois Supreme Court web site under the section headed "Circuit Court of Illinois", "Jury Information", Jury Instructions".

The first changes to be posted on the web site deal with Construction Negligence and Strict Product Liability.

"This is a very nice and, really, the best way to keep judges and lawyers up to date between the publication of the formal books on civil jury instructions," said Thomas A. Clancy, a Chicago attorney who is chair of the Supreme Court Committee on Jury Instructions in Civil Cases.

"Every civil case has at least some jury instructions and in an instruction conference with the judge, everyone has the book open on their lap; but communication gaps can occur between those participants who have seen the advance sheets and others who have not. It's a problem and this is a way to close those communication gaps."

Illinois Supreme Court Rule 239 (a) allows the use of Illinois Pattern Jury Instructions recommended by lawyers and approved by trial judges in specific cases. Any jury instruction is formally approved or rejected, however, only after it has been judicially questioned and considered.

The Illinois Supreme Court's web address is www.state.il.us/court.